

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILING A PETITION** **FOR A PLACE ON THE BALLOT**

The City Charter, Article III, Section 4 requires a filing fee of \$500.00. The Texas Election Code, Section 143.005 requires a city to provide candidates an alternative to the filing fee. Therefore, in lieu of the filing fee, the City of Austin provides that a candidate may file his/her application for a place on the ballot along with a petition. The petition must contain the appropriate number of valid signatures [*see below*]. For council districts, a valid signature is one from any qualified voter within that particular district. For mayor, a valid signature is one from any qualified voter within the City of Austin. The required number of valid signatures is determined through reference to the Texas Election Code, Section 143.005(d)(2). Listed below are the numbers of signatures required on a petition for each district and for the at-large mayoral election:

Mayor (at large): 244 signatures

District 1: 25 signatures

District 2: 25 signatures

District 3: 25 signatures

District 4: 25 signatures

District 5: 32 signatures

District 6: 25 signatures

District 7: 31 signatures

District 8: 30 signatures

District 9: 29 signatures

District 10: 52 signatures

Election Code, Section 141.066 states:

- Signing more than one petition is prohibited.
- The following statement must appear at the top of each page of a petition: "Signing the petition of more than one candidate for the same office in the same election is prohibited."
- A signature on a candidate's petition is invalid if the signer signed the petition subsequent to signing a petition of another candidate for the same office in the same election.

### Completing the Petition

1. The name of the person circulating the petition must be listed in the section in the upper right-hand corner. Indicate the number of pages being submitted. The circulator may make as many copies as needed of the blank petition page and the continuation page.
2. The next section of the petition must contain the following information:
  - City: Austin
  - Name: Name of the candidate

- Address: Candidate's address
  - Office sought: Either Mayor or the specific Council District.
3. The next section contains the signer's information. Please encourage signers to write as legibly as possible. The signature of the voter is required to be in the signer's own handwriting. The following should be provided for each signer:
- Date he/she is signing the petition.
  - His/her signature.
  - His/her printed name.
  - Street address and the name of the city, state and zip code. Ditto marks [“ “] can be used if the city, state and zip code are the same as the line above. The name of the city should be written out at least on the first signature line.
  - County (Hays, Travis or Williamson).
  - Voter registration number.
  - Date of birth.
- (Either the voter registration number or date of birth must be provided. It is recommended that both be provided to ensure the correct signature is validated.)
4. At the bottom of the form, the Affidavit of Circulator must be completed and must be notarized by a Notary. The Affidavit of the Circulator must be attached to the petition pages circulated by that individual. This section must be completed for each circulator.

Upon receipt of the petition, the City Clerk's office will verify the signatures to ensure the signatures are valid and the petition is sufficient. If the number of valid signatures is equal to or more than the amount required by state law, the petition is declared valid. If the number of valid signatures is less than the amount required by state law, the petition is declared invalid. It is recommended that a person collect more than the required number of signatures to ensure the petition is valid. Once the validation process has been completed, the candidate will be notified of the results.

If the petition is declared invalid and the deadline for a candidate to file an application for a place on the ballot has not passed, another application may be filed along with a payment of the \$500.00 filing fee or submission of a new petition.